AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of the claims will replace the previous version, and the listing of the claims:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1-3. (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) A stencil sheet transfer method of a stencil printing machine, comprising the steps of:

perforating a desired image while transferring a stencil sheet;

transferring the perforated stencil sheet at a predetermined speed on a transfer path of the stencil sheet;

detecting passing of the stencil sheet at predetermined positions of the transfer path and reducing a speed of transferring the stencil sheet less than the predetermined speed while further transferring the sheet and keeping perforation of the desired image on the stencil sheet; and

winding the stencil sheet around a drum in a cylindrical shape.

5. (currently amended) A stencil sheet transfer method of a stencil printing machine comprising the steps of:

perforating a desired image ~~by~~ while transferring a stencil sheet;

transferring the perforated stencil sheet at a predetermined speed on a transfer path of the perforated stencil sheet comprising a common transfer path used commonly by all of drums when the perforated stencil sheet is transferred to and wound around any one of a plurality of the drums in a cylindrical shape and a noncommon transfer path communicated with the common transfer path;

detecting passing of the stencil sheet at the common transfer

path and the noncommon transfer path and reducing a transfer speed of the stencil sheet when the stencil sheet is determined to be transferred to a boundary between the common transfer path and the noncommon transfer path; and

winding the stencil sheet around one of the plurality of drums in a cylindrical shape where the stencil sheet can reach by passing through the common transfer path and the noncommon transfer path.

6. (new) A stencil sheet transfer method according to claim 4, wherein said reduced speed less than the predetermined speed is more than zero.